



### What's Next?

Hear from outgoing VISTAs about their plans after service

VISTA Viewfinder  
Issue 8: August 5, 2008

**VISTA: Volunteers In Service To America**  
Since 1964, 175,000 Strong



VISTA  
**viewfinder**

1 VISTA since 1964

2 Volunteers in Service

3 175,000 Strong

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##### Leaving VISTA soon?

#### ISSUE 8: August 5, 2008

### Be Open to Every Opportunity

Need to figure out what to do after you complete your service year? These VISTAs from the [Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota](#) for Humanity of Minnesota project talk about their service and future plans.

#### THE LANDSCAPE



**VISTA Campus now launched!**

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#### FAQ

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**Take the [What's Next](#) course on the VISTA Campus and prepare yourself for life after VISTA service.**

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What are your plans after you complete this year of service with VISTA?

(1) Brenna Severson: I am beginning a two-year Human Resource & Industrial Relations Graduate Program at the Carlson School of Management through the University of MN. As part of this program I am interning at the Minnesota Zoo to create a sustainable internship program.

(2) Marion Gianlorenzi: I plan to remain active with this office as a volunteer, doing committee work. I am retiring from paid employment and hope to be able to talk myself in to getting my life organized for the future. My husband and I hope to do some traveling by train.

(3) Bethany Kuehne: I am continuing for a second term with VISTA and Habitat for Humanity.

(4) Lisa Modry: I am the Youth Director for a local Lutheran Church in Rochester, MN.

(5) Emily Sweiger: Emily left the program early to work for Habitat for Humanity.

(6) Sara Zidon: Moving to Colorado and looking for a job working with abused women.

(7) Jane Knealing: I am serving another year with Habitat for Humanity Minnesota as their [VISTA Leader](#). I am really looking forward to the move to Minneapolis and to the new work adventures I will be facing.

(8) Katie Tucholke: I am taking over as my affiliate's Program Coordinator.

(9) Connie McLemore: I am staying on as a VISTA for a second term with Habitat for Humanity.

(10) Jen Koth: I will be an [AmeriCorps NCCC](#) member based at their Sacramento campus.

(11) Lindsay Jenson: I will be serving as a volunteer in the [Peace Corps](#) in the stunning country of Nicaragua.

(12) Molly Berg: I will be moving on to the Habitat State Support Office to work on incorporating “Green” materials and techniques into Habitat builds.

If you could give a current VISTA a piece of advice regarding how to prepare for life after they complete their year, what would you tell them?

Lisa: Be open to every opportunity. Take advantage of all of the different things you get to do during your VISTA year, and find out what you really enjoy. Then decide what you want to do next and pursue it relentlessly. VISTA is a great stepping stone to the next part of your life.

Marion: Treasure the connections you have made with your volunteers, Executive Director and Board Members. From my observations, any one of them would be a valuable mentor.

Thinking back on your service, what is your fondest memory?

Lindsay: The fondest moment in my service as a VISTA this year was the realization that I wasn't in this whole thing called service alone. When I first began I was so concerned about how I could personally make an impact on this community. I primarily focused my energy on what I could do, getting way too stressed out about not effectively making a difference. Then I began turning to volunteers involved in our organization who were only partially involved before, but wanted to increase their participation. It was amazing what we accomplished together. When the committees came together as one large group, we really started to see the impact we were making. I will surely miss the relationships I have gained with people in the Fergus Falls community. Looking back at this service year and seeing how important interaction with others is in the success of a project, I can now say that without positive links in an organization, it will inevitably falter.

Jane: My favorite memory would have to be working with an elderly volunteer named Conrad. Conrad is in his mid 80's and volunteers every morning to pull nails from donated lumber. And every morning we enjoy a cup of green tea and he talks to me about his life. I have come to love my mornings with Conrad. Then throughout the rest of

my day, if he catches me not smiling, he always say's "life's too short not to smile."

Want to hear more about these Minnesota Habitat for Humanity VISTAs? Read their [complete Q&A here](#).

[back to top](#)

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## Frequently Asked Questions:

### **Q: What is the Viewfinder?**

*A: VISTA means view-looking out on a broad expanse. The viewfinder, a toy that all generations of VISTAs recognize, was a kind of binocular that focused on points of interest, highlights, and snapshots in living color. The VISTA Viewfinder surveys in the landscape and zeroes in on service.*

### **Q. Why the Viewfinder?**

*A. Here's your direct link to connecting with other VISTAs, learning what they are doing, and helping to spread the message of VISTA and national service!*

### **Q. How can I contribute?**

*A. Have a story to tell? Submission ideas? Contact [vistaoutreach@cns.gov](mailto:vistaoutreach@cns.gov). Use the Viewfinder to highlight your VISTA service and share your experiences with others across the country!*

[back to top](#)

